# September 23, 2010 meeting minutes Cambridge GLBT Commission

# **NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2010**

Call to Order

Toni Snow recorded these minutes.

<u>Commissioners Present:</u> John Gintell, Sarav Chidambaram, Toni Snow, Kevin Shpritzer, Leslie Phillips, Tony Wieczorek, Mal Malme, Priscilla Lee, Colby Berger, Bob Parlin

<u>Commissioners Absent:</u> (excused) – Jeff Walker, Steven Lee.

<u>Guests:</u> Supt. Chris Burke, Cambridge Police Dept. and Melody Brazo, Citywide LGBT Family Liaison of Welcoming Schools Cambridge.

**Announcement**: Open Meeting Law – training session (at Main Library) October 21<sup>st</sup> 3-5pm and also Saturday, October 30<sup>th</sup>. RSVP to tahmed@cambridge.

I. Melody Brazo: Discussion and hand out of achievements for last school year. (Report Attached below) Melody does many things in addition to running the Welcoming Schools program. Works with teachers and administrators on GLBT issues. Offers bullying prevention workshops. She has observed that there is more interest in bullying prevention now that bullying is in legislation and press. Focus is now on bullies as" bad people" but Melody suggests focusing on "school climate" as a broader agenda.

State requires a bullying prevention plan to be in place by December. It will involve a broad training initiative to include teachers, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, custodians, etc. Sarav: training should also include cultural diversity. It's possible for Commission to take on this topic.

- II. Final details are underway for Self Defense Workshop offered by Impact Boston. To be held at West Cambridge Youth Center on Sunday, October 24, 2010, 1-4pm. Food will be available for participants at end of workshop. We will recruit for participants through Charter Schools, Public Schools, Youth Centers, GSA's. Workshop will be GLBT-youth focused, high school age.
- III. Danehy Park Family Day outreach event all set for September 25<sup>th</sup>. Toni S. and Mal M. will distribute remaining 75 tote bags and survey questionnaires.
- IV. Sarav C. and John G. and others have worked with CCTV to produce a video for National Coming Out Day. Video will run in October and November. Sarav: should Commission also partner with P10E activities on Coming Out Day? Ask Ed Byrne.

- V. Recruitment of new commissioners. Invitation has been posted on Web and we should alert colleagues/friends who might be interested. Deadline is November 22<sup>nd</sup>. We agreed upon the plan for a "Welcoming Committee" (to be selected) to engage and orient new commissioners.
- VI. Liaison and Outreach to other GLBT groups in Cambridge:

We discussed the idea of how to establish liaisons with other groups in Cambridge but no conclusions were reached. An example is the Cambridge Men's Group (500ppl). Another idea is to hold community events and collaborate with these groups: e.g. Gay Day, Film Night, Karaoke. Event should be fun.

VII. Planning & Goals for rest of the year: Item tabled for future discussion due to lack of time

## VIII. Other Items:

Can the Commission play a role in outreach for social support and assistance to victims of Hate Crimes? We could follow the model established for victims of domestic violence. Supt. Burke indicated that there are not a lot of Hate Crimes in Cambridge, but when they occur, responding officers could easily distribute pamphlets and resource lists to victims. Will discuss further with Colleen Johnson from HRC.

Melody Brazo suggested a project to visit all libraries to see how they're stocked on LGBT materials. It would be a large project because all libraries would have to be visited (School and Public).

Pricilla Lee reported on an issue with how the City reports health insurance as income and that the resulting tax burden can be significant for couples/families. We discussed approaching City Council for a Policy Order to highlight the problem.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

# Year End Report June 2010

#### **Outreach to Parents**

- 1. Sent annual Kindergarten Letter to all kindergarten parents.
- 2. Expanded Welcoming Schools presence on CPS website.
- 3. Represented Welcoming Schools at two Kindergarten Information Nights in October 2009.
- 4. Screened Straightlaced: How Gender's Got Us All Tied Up for elementary and middle school parents (12/8/10).
- 5. Screened Straightlaced: How Gender's Got Us All Tied Up for CRLS parents (1/27/10).
- 6. Assisted with Kindergarten registration during the month of January.
- 7. Produced and distributed three issues of **Welcoming Schools News** (Fall, Winter and Spring/Summer).
- 8. Met with parents from a total of 7 different schools, over the course of the year, regarding concerns about their experiences in the system, particularly around bullying.
- 9. Met with three different private school families who were transferring their children to public schools here in Cambridge.
- 10. Represented Welcoming Schools at the **Annual Pride Brunch** in June.

## **Outreach to Teachers/Staff/Administrators**

- 1. Met with all the Family Liaisons re: ways to integrate Welcoming Schools in individual elementary schools.
- 2. Collaborated on development of bullying prevention Xblock at CRLS.
- 3. Collaborated on script development and interview for Youth View Cambridge DVD on bullying at CRLS.
- 4. Straightlaced film and class discussions at King Open.
- 5. Welcoming LGBT Families workshop for CPS New Teacher seminar.
- 6. Worked with CRLS STARS to help them prepare for elementary school visits.

### Other Activities

- 1. Presenter for Lesley New Teacher seminar: Welcoming All Families into the Classroom.
- 2. Presenter for Wheelock GLBT Issues seminar: Addressing LGBT Issues Workplaces.
- 3. Began to develop LGBT supportive materials that can be used in middle schools in conjunction with Developmental Designs to address school and classroom climate issues (bullying, exclusion, harassment, etc).

# **Committee/Working Group memberships**

- 1. City-wide Restorative Justice Working Group
- 2. Healthy Children Task Force
- 3. CPS Liaison Executive Committee

## Plans For School Year 2010-2011

- 1. School Climate/Bully Prevention coordination.
- 2. Donate age-appropriate books that positively portray LGBT characters/families in all 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classroom libraries.
- 3. Continue development of LGBT supportive materials to be used in conjunction with Developmental Designs.
- 4. Asses LGBT-supportive offerings in elementary school library collections.